CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE I.

A

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND:

OR, THE

CONSOLATIONS

OF

HUMAN LIFE.

By JOHN LANGHORNE, D.D.

Contra Fortunam tolleres animos, et omnia tela ſua, non tanquam poſſent venire, ſed tanquam utique eſſent ventura proſpiceres. SEN. Ep.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Reflections contained in the following Sheets were intended for the private Uſe of a Friend under Affliction; but the Author had not proceeded far with them, before a ſevere Event of the ſame Kind rendered it neceſſary for him to call home the Precepts for the Support of his own Mind. It would be happy if he could recommend their Efficacy on Experience. All he can ſay in their Favour, with regard to himſelf, is, that the writing of them helped him to forget his Sorrows. All he can preſume to hope for others, is, that they may

find the ſame Advantage while they read them.—Yet this is no very idle Apology: For he who has by any Means removed the Idea of Miſery, though it were but for a Moment, has not laboured in vain.

CON-

CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE I.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

FREDERIC.

I HAVE ſuffered ſo much, and enjoyed ſo little, that I wanted the Conſolations you ſpeak of; but for you, my PHARAMOND, I hope Providence has a better Fate, and that the Art of bearing Evils is the laſt thing you need learn.

PHARAMOND.

Whatever you may have the Goodneſs to hope for me, you would not have me forget that I am a Man.—You are incapable of ſuch Kindneſs—It is from your Experience in Adverſity that I promiſe myſelf Inſtruction—You have borne, with ſo much Firmneſs, ſuch a Variety of Afflictions, that one would think you poſſeſſed of ſome Secret, which, in a peculiar Manner, ſupports the Soul upon the moſt trying Occaſions—I know you too well to ſuſpect you of Inſenſibility.

FREDERIC.

Indeed, you ought not: I love my Friends, and take a Pleaſure in their Happineſs. I agree with you, too, that it is a right Rule to avail ourſelves of the Experience and the Conduct of others. It is, undoubtedly, the ſhort-

eſt

eſt and the eaſieſt Way to Wiſdom: But yet one may poſſibly be miſled by it. The Events of Life, and the Diſpoſitions of Men, are ſo various, that the Conduct of one Man may neither be practicable nor applicable to another, in Circumſtances apparently ſimilar.

PHARAMOND.

This requires Explanation.

FREDERIC.

You will find it, if you look upon Misfortunes in general. Their Size is not to be eſtimated from their Quality, but from the Temper and Underſtanding of the Perſon who ſuffers them. AMYNTOR, you know, who is lately dead, was equally the Friend of THERON and of AURELIUS. He was the Patron of both, likewiſe; and both were entirely dependent on his Bounty. The Loſs they ſuſtained,

therefore, was the ſame, but not ſo the Misfortune. AURELIUS is a Man of keen Senſibility and Care; THERON is remarkable for an obſtinate Fortitude and Negligence—I am ſorry for THERON; but I grieve for AURELIUS—I pity him from my Soul—He ſeems to have received a Death-wound from the ſame Blow that hardly ſtaggered the other. The Conduct of THERON cannot be recommended to him. His Misfortune is not the ſame; and his Conſolations muſt be different.

PHARAMOND.

I ſee the Truth of this: But are there not general Conſolations applicable to all Perſons under Affliction, I mean all that have Senſibility, ſuppoſing ſuch only to be capable of Affliction?

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

Undoubtedly: There are common Sources of Comfort, to which all may have Recourſe, and from which all muſt principally derive their Satisfaction; but the general Medicines of the Mind, like thoſe of the Body, will depend chiefly, for Succeſs, on the Skill with which they are adminiſtered. Our Conſolations, in general, are to be found in Religion and Philoſophy; yet both may be perverted in the Application; and from theſe ſalutary Springs may be drawn the moſt fatal Poiſons.

PHARAMOND.

Is it poſſible, then? Can any thing deſtructive proceed from what is Divine? The Author of our Religion has left it on Record, that a good Tree muſt bring forth good Fruit: If the Syſtem He hath eſtabliſhed be a good

good one, how ſhould it be productive of Evil?

FREDERIC.

Excuſe me: I ought to have made a Diſtinction. It is not from Religion or Philoſophy that Men derive Folly and Wretchedneſs, inſtead of Wiſdom and Conſolation. It is from Fanaticiſm and Sophiſtry, which their Profeſſors have had the Impudence to call by the Names of Religion and Philoſophy.

PHARAMOND.

I have no clear Idea of Fanaticiſm; Pray tell me what it is.

FREDERIC.

It is more eaſy to ſay what it is not. It is no Part of right Religion, becauſe that is a ſober and conſiſtent thing; and the invariable Characteriſtics of Fana-

Fanaticiſm are Inconſiſtency and Extravagance. It has ſtill leſs to do with Morality, which it avowedly depreciates or condemns. It has no more Affinity with true Devotion, than Inſanity has with Reaſon. It is an undue Influence of the Imagination in Matters of Religion; but it is not limited to particular Principles, or Forms. It varies its ſhape as often as VERTUMNUS, and, like him too, it generally ends in the old Woman——

——*poſitis ad Tempora Canis,*
Adſimulavit Anum; cultoſque intravit in Hortos.

PHARAMOND.

I think *Ovid* has repreſented the God you ſpeak of as moſt ſucceſsful under that ſhape.

FRE-

FREDERIC.

The ſame may be ſaid of Fanaticiſm. But we are now inquiring what are the rational Conſolations of Religion—Theſe ariſe firſt and principally from the Idea it gives of the Supreme Being. From the Revelation of the New Teſtament, which is and ought to be, excluſively, our Guide, we are taught to look upon Him in the Capacity of a benevolent and affectionate Parent: We are inſtructed to addreſs Him as ſuch in our Prayers; and when we call upon Him, we are commanded to call Him OUR FATHER. This paternal Character is intended to give us the moſt intelligible Idea, we are capable of entertaining, concerning his Diſpoſition towards us. The Properties of a virtuous Father occur to us. We find them to be Conſideration, Affection, and Vigilance. The End of thoſe Qualities is our Preſervation and Happineſs. We apply theſe Principles,

ciples, in their utmoſt Excellence, to our Supreme Parent. The Qualities, which in Man, we admire, under all the Infirmities of his Nature, we aſcribe to God in a Degree adequate to his Perfection.

PHARAMOND.

This ſeems reaſonable; but what Conſolations would you derive from hence?

FREDERIC.

The greateſt of which the Nature and the Mind of Man are capable. When I find myſelf under the Patronage and Tuition of a Being that is infinitely powerful; when I reflect that He is concerned for my Preſervation and Happineſs, much more than the moſt tender and moſt vigilant of earthly Parents can be for their Children, I feel a Confidence and Security that entirely

entirely poſſeſs my Soul. My Heart ſtandeth ſo faſt that it cannot ſhrink. I ſmile at the Appearance of Danger, Diſtreſs, and Pain; as a Shepherd, who is ſheltered under a Rock, beholds with Indifference an approaching Storm. God is my Father, and GOD IS LOVE. I am ſecure in his Affection. He created me with no other Deſign than to make me happy, and his Intentions cannot be vain.

PHARAMOND.

He created you with a Deſign to make you happy, and yet He permits you to be miſerable—How is that conſiſtent with the paternal Character you aſcribe to him? Surely, if He has the Affection, He ſeems to want the Vigilance you ſpeak of.

FREDERIC.

From a falſe Concluſion you have drawn a falſe Inference—You ſay that Provi-

Providence permits me to be miſerable, and from hence you arraign his paternal Character—Is it neceſſary for me to repeat, what I told you before, that the Senſe of that paternal Character preſerves me from Miſery. If I were miſerable, your Argument might at leaſt have my Folly to ſupport it, but, as I am not, it falls to the Ground.

PHARAMOND.

Yet there are others who are miſerable; and they, too, have the ſame immortal Being for their Father.

FREDERIC.

No: God is not the Father of the Miſerable.

PHARAMOND.

You alarm me: He is an Enemy to Sin; but I never underſtood that he was the Foe of Miſery.

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

God is not, in effect, the Father of the Miſerable; becauſe they do not look upon, or conſider him in that Capacity. It is impoſſible that any one, who rightly reflects on the paternal Capacity of God, ſhould be miſerable.

PHARAMOND.

Are Pain and Poverty, then, no Evils?

FREDERIC.

They are ſuch only to thoſe who take not God for their Father.

PHARAMOND.

But you allow, that thoſe who do, may, nevertheleſs, be in Poverty and Pain?

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

I allow it.

PHARAMOND.

Of what Conſequence is it, then, whether they look upon God in the paternal Capacity, or not; ſince they are equally expoſed to Poverty and Pain in either Circumſtance?

FREDERIC.

It is of the greateſt Conſequence.

PHARAMOND.

I own I have my Doubts—I am impatient till they are removed.

FREDERIC.

You will acknowledge, that Good and Evil borrow their chief Importance

tance from the Opinions we entertain of them.

PHARAMOND.

I acknowledge it—

FREDERIC.

That thoſe things cannot poſſibly be Bleſſings, which we do not believe and embrace as ſuch; and that on the other hand, thoſe are really no Evils, which we do not eſtimate in that light.

PHARAMOND.

All this is certain.

FREDERIC.

Now if we really look upon God in the Character of a Father, though thoſe things which are called Evils may happen to us, we ſhall not think them ſuch.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

I cannot enter into that Diſtinction; for though I ſhould both call God my Father, and repoſe in him the moſt filial Confidence, yet, if I ſuffered the Diſtreſſes of Pain, or Poverty, I do not ſee how it would be poſſible for me not to think them Evils.

FREDERIC.

If you ſhould look upon God in the Capacity of a Parent, would you not aſcribe to him the Properties of a good Parent?

PHARAMOND.

Certainly.

FREDERIC.

Is it not the Property of a good Parent to prevent every thing that is really pernicious

pernicious from happening to his Children, if it be in his Power to prevent it?

PHARAMOND.

Without doubt.

FREDERIC.

Is it not in the Power of God to prevent every thing that is *really* pernicious from happening to us?

PHARAMOND.

It is not to be denied.

FREDERIC.

You have granted, then, that God is your Father; that of courſe he muſt be a good Father; that it is the Property of a good Father to prevent every thing that is really evil from happening to his Children, if it be in his Power;

er; that this muſt always be in the Power of God—

PHARAMOND.

It ſeems, that I have made all theſe Conceſſions; and I now apprehend what you would infer from them—

FREDERIC.

This obvious Concluſion; that God being our Father, and being good and powerful, will not permit any *real* Evil to happen to his Children.

PHARAMOND.

I cannot object to any thing of this: I would rather perſuade myſelf that it is ſo.

FREDERIC.

Yes, my PHARAMOND, this is the great Fortreſs, the ſtrongeſt Redoubt of

of the Soul. While I am confident that the paternal Care and Affection of the Supreme Providence will ſuffer no *real* Evil to befall me, I cannot conſider any thing that happens to me, under that Denomination, as ſuch; and thus I reſt ſatisfied upon this ſimple Principle.

PHARAMOND.

That Satisfaction is, indeed, to be envied; but the Principle, I fear, is hard to be acquired; ſince, if one may judge from Appearances, it is far from being prevalent in the World.

FREDERIC.

'Tis an obvious, and a melancholy Truth: And yet the little Regard this Principle has paid to it, is not owing to the Dfficu lty with which it is to be acquired; for when once the Exiſtence of a creating God is allowed, the Providence

vidence of a preſerving God cannot eaſily be diſallowed.

PHARAMOND.

In what Reſpect does the Belief of the latter depend upon the Admiſſion of the former?

FREDERIC.

You allow that a Being of infinite Power and Intelligence, whom we call God, created the Univerſe.

PHARAMOND.

This I believe, becauſe in the ſeveral Parts of it I obſerve a rational and ſkilful Deſign.

FREDERIC.

And do not you believe, too, that the ſame Order and Conformation have been preſerved in the ſeveral Parts

of the Univerſe, from its Creation till the preſent Time?

PHARAMOND.

I muſt believe it; becauſe from what I conceive of the Connection and mutual Dependency of thoſe Parts, I apprehend that if any conſiderable Variation, either in the Diſpoſition, or in the ſpecific Gravity of one of them had taken Place, the whole Syſtem muſt have been affected by it.

FREDERIC.

You judge rightly. But is not Matter itſelf, and conſequently, all Things that are compoſed of it, ſubject to Variation and Decay?

PHARAMOND.

So it ſeems.

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

Therefore as the ſame exact Proportion and Diſpoſition of Parts, which were neceſſary in the Formation of the Univerſe, muſt as neceſſarily be continued for its Preſervation; and as every thing that is compoſed of Matter is liable to Variation and Decay, is it not evident that the ſame Power and Skill which were exerted to create, muſt be employed to preſerve this Syſtem?

PHARAMOND.

I ſhall make no Difficulty of granting this.

FREDERIC.

However, I will beg no Conceſſions; nor ſhall you give me any Credit upon ſuppoſed Principles. Your own Reaſon convinces you, that the Creator of

the Univerſe muſt be a Being of infinite Wiſdom.

PHARAMOND.

Nothing more certain!

FREDERIC.

And is it not the Property of Wiſdom to propoſe ſome End in every thing that it does?

PHARAMOND.

No doubt of it.

FREDERIC.

The Supreme Wiſdom, then, by which this Syſtem of the Univerſe was framed, muſt ſtill have a *Regard to the End* for which it was created.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

Of courſe it muſt be ſo.

FREDERIC.

And what is that *Regard to the End* but a *providential Attention*—a conſtant Care and Vigilance, that the ſeveral Parts and Members of the Creation perform the Offices aſſigned them?

PHARAMOND.

I allow you this—But may not the Creator have made his Work ſo perfect that it ſhould no further require his Care?

FREDERIC.

If we may judge from the viſible Objects of this lower World, (and I think we ought to judge from what we

ſee) that does not appear to have been the Scheme of his Providence.

PHARAMOND.

Can any Reaſon be given why it ſhould not?

FREDERIC.

As good a Reaſon may be given for that, as can be given for his creating the Univerſe at all.

PHARAMOND.

What is that, then?

FREDERIC.

The Pleaſure of exerciſing his Benevolence.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

That Argument is ſomewhat hard to digeſt—that God ſhould create an imperfect Syſtem, or even make any particular Members of that Syſtem imperfect, for the ſake of exerciſing his Benevolence!

FREDERIC.

Only allow the Poſition, and be not diſturbed about the Argument. I mean not to aſſert that the Pleaſure of exerciſing his Benevolence was the Reaſon why God made imperfect Creatures: Though that appears to be the only Reaſon why He made any Creatures at all, and might partially, too, be aſſigned as a Cauſe of admitting Imperfection in his Works, ſince thus it would afford Him more frequent Opportunities of interpoſing his providential Kindneſs—Had this Syſtem been created perfect, what Occaſion for his

Eye, or his tender Mercies to be over all his Works? Every thing would have haſted to its Deſtination, without Impediment or Error—The great Work of the Creator would no longer have been an Object for the Agency of his Powers, and, like the Diſciples of EPICURUS, we might have imagined Him to repoſe in an ungodlike Indolence.

PHARAMOND.

All this may be granted; and yet, methinks, I ſhould not have been ſatisfied, had you urged it as the principal Cauſe why the Creator admitted Imperfection into his Work—This Queſtion would ſtill have had Weight with me; "If God is ſo benevolent a Being as He is repreſented, would it not have been more conſiſtent with his Goodneſs to have exempted his Creatures from Evil entirely, by giving them an original Perfection, than to have

have expoſed them to Suffering through the Imperfection of their Nature, merely for the Exerciſe of his interpoſing Providence ?"

FREDERIC.

Yet, ſuppoſing it were ſo, PHARAMOND, ſhould you be unwilling to hold an imperfect Being upon ſuch Terms ? Should you think it hard that the Life, which was given you, had ſtill ſome need of the Giver's Care ? Would not that have the Appearance either of Pride or Ingratitude, either of an Ambition to be independent of the Giver, or of a Diſſatisfaction at the little Value of the Gift ? Would you refuſe a pleaſing or uſeful Piece of Machinery, becauſe it might be neceſſary for the Artiſt who made it, at Times, to rectify its Motion ?

PHARAMOND.

I did not expect ſuch Queſtions as theſe! Is not all this beſide the Purpoſe? It was what God might have done for Man, and not what Man might have accepted from God, that was the Subject of my Obſervation.

FREDERIC.

I remember it well—And yet the Queſtions I have raiſed upon it are more to the Purpoſe, perhaps, than you will allow them to be. When the Queſtion is, "Why has not God done more "for Man? Why has he left him ſo "imperfect a Being?" it is ſurely of Conſequence to aſk whether the Gift of human Life, under the Superintendency of Providence, is not an acceptable Gift—If it ſhould be allowed to be ſo, the Divine Goodneſs can never be arraigned for with-holding ſuperior Privileges,

vileges, ſince, in that Caſe, Man might continue to murmur that God had not communicated to him his own Perfections.

PHARAMOND.

It is upon this, then, that you reſt the Argument, that human Life, with all its Imperfections, is a valuable Gift, and conſequently the Poſſeſſor has no right to complain.—

FREDERIC.

No, my PHARAMOND, a little further Indulgence—Though I perceive that your Anſwer is ready—You are impatient to tell me this does not preclude your Queſtion—How is it conſiſtent with the Divine Goodneſs to admit Imperfection, and its Conſequence, Evil? This, you would ſay, is what I aſk, and I am yet to be anſwered.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

You have ſpoken for me.

FREDERIC.

As an Advocate on the part of the Supreme Being, I needed not indeed, have ſought the Aid of collateral Arguments—I might have come to the Point at once, and aſſerted both the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Providence in the Admiſſion of Imperfection, by ſhewing you that, without it, there could have been no ſuch thing as Virtue.

PHARAMOND.

How ſhould a State of Imperfection be neceſſary to the Exiſtence of Virtue?

FREDERIC.

Becauſe Virtue depends upon the Poſſibility of acting wrong. Had Man been created perfect, he could not have erred; he could not have acted wrong—Now if he could not have acted wrong, he would have had no Merit in acting right; and the Merit of acting right is Virtue.

PHARAMOND.

Well, that, I think, is ſufficiently clear. Yet ſome, perhaps, might doubt whether the Exiſtence of Virtue itſelf were an Equivalent for the Admiſſion of Imperfection, and its Conſequence, Evil.

FREDERIC.

To cut off that Doubt, the readieſt Way is to weigh the Advantages of the former againſt the Diſadvantages of the latter.

latter. If Virtue and its Rewards will not more than counterbalance Imperfection and its Evils, the Argument in its Favour muſt be given up.

PHARAMOND.

A Compariſon of this Nature is, with reſpect to myſelf, unneceſſary, becauſe I ſcruple not to take the immortal Rewards of Virtue into the Queſtion.

FREDERIC.

Acknowledge but that, and every Point is gained, with Regard to the Conſolations ariſing from Religion; in Favour of which the Argument appears to ſtand thus—The World was created by the Wiſdom of God; it is the Property of Wiſdom to do every thing for ſome good End; the Accompliſhment of this End requires the Agency of his Providence; that Agency muſt be extended to his Creatures; Man, amongſt

amongſt the reſt, muſt be the Object of it. Agreeably to theſe Deductions of Reaſon, he is inſtructed, by divine Revelation, to look upon God in the Capacity of a Father, and, by the further Light of Reaſon, he is taught to expect from him all that can be done by the moſt perfect and moſt powerful of Parents for the Happineſs of his Offspring. If, therefore, he ſuffers what is called Evil in the World, he does not conſider it in that Light, becauſe he knows it muſt be permitted by his providential Father, and that, as he could have no other End than his Happineſs in View, he would permit nothing that ſhould be inconſiſtent with that End.

PHARAMOND.

I am perfectly ſatisfied with this Account of the Conſolations that ariſe from Religion; but—

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

But, what? my PHARAMOND! Surely, if you are ſatisfied, no further Objections can remain. Pardon me for interrupting you.—I own I am mortified, if a bare Satisfaction with the Argument is all you can acknowledge. —How ill muſt I have defended the beſt of Cauſes! What an unanimating Advocate for the moſt important, the moſt intereſting of Truths!—You are ſatisfied, my Friend; but does not the Concluſion bring ſomething more than Satisfaction along with it?—Do you feel no freſh Support within? No elevating Confidence? Is it poſſible, that you can look upon the Divine Being in the Capacity wherein we have now conſidered him, without ſome new Complacency, ſome Confirmation of Heart, that you did not feel before? —The Son, the Care, the Object of everlaſting Kindneſs, and unbounded Power.—Rejoice, my PHARAMOND, rejoice in your Exiſtence!—It is good in

in itſelf, and it will infallibly lead to ſomething better.

PHARAMOND.

I partake moſt cordially in theſe animating Sentiments, nor did any farther Objections occur to me. I was going to remind you, that the Conſolations of Philoſophy were yet to be conſidered.

FREDERIC.

My Opinions, ſuch as they are, will always be at your Service; but let us, if you pleaſe, defer the Subject till To-morrow.

CON-

CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE II.

CONSOLATIONS.

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DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

PHARAMOND.

IT is related, concerning one of the Diſciples of an Heathen Philoſopher, that his Impatience to hear the Lectures of his Maſter would throw him into Convulſions, while the latter was preparing to begin: An

An Eagerneſs of the ſame Kind muſt be my Apology, if I have broken in upon your Studies, or your Retirement too early.

FREDERIC.

I am never ſo ill diſpoſed to receive Apologies, as when they are attended with Compliment; but both are ſuperfluous here, ſo let us ſit down.

PHARAMOND.

You were mortified laſt Night, that the Satisfaction your Arguments afforded me was not attended with ſomething of an enthuſiaſtic Pleaſure. In reſpect of their Importance, you were certainly in the right; But does not that Kind of Pleaſure ariſe chiefly from the Imagination —Reaſon muſt lay the Grounds both of Confidence and Expectation; but it ſeems they muſt be daſhed with the Colourings of the Fancy

Fancy before they can *delight* or *elevate* the Heart.

FREDERIC.

If the Imagination is permitted only to follow the Underſtanding, it may produce the agreeable Effects you ſpeak of, without, otherwiſe, doing Harm. Thus, when you are convinced of the univerſal Agency and paternal Care of Providence, to contemplate him through the Aid of Imagination in all his benevolent Capacities and Operations, will, undoubtedly, add Pleaſure to Confidence. You ſhould indeed, have had Leiſure for Contemplations of this kind, before I had expected to ſee you ſo *highly* ſatisfied.

PHARAMOND.

An Accident has occaſioned thoſe pleaſing Senſations you deſcribe; and if they would abide with me, or even indulge me with frequent Viſits, I would

would freely acquit the World for all the reſt of its Pleaſures.

FREDERIC.

I muſt know what this was.

PHARAMOND.

It is uſual with me, when I go to Reſt, to take up ſome Poet, or other Writer of Fancy, from whom I receive the laſt Ideas of the Day. My Reaſon for this is, to put my Imagination in a pleaſing Train; for I fancy, if it is in good Humour when I fall aſleep, it will continue to employ itſelf agreeably the reſt of the Night.—You may ſmile, but I aſſure you that this is often the Effect.

FREDERIC.

I hope you verily believe it.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

Moſt ſeriouſly.

FREDERIC.

I am glad of it. But upon what Author, pray, did you ſleep laſt Night?

PHARAMOND.

The Book I chanced to take up was the Metamorphoſes of OVID. The Paſſage I read was the Deſcription of JUPITER viſiting and repairing the Earth after the Conflagration of PHAETON; and after ſeveral Times repeating theſe inimitable Lines,

——*Terras, Hominumque Labores*
Perſpicit——
——*Fonteſque, & nondum audentia labi*
Flumina reſtituit: Dat Terræ Gramina, Frondes

Arboribus, Lætaſque jubet revireſcere Sylvas:

I cloſed my Eyes, and immediately fell aſleep. The paternal Character of Providence, which your Converſation had ſo ſtrongly impreſſed upon my Mind, added to the Poet's beautiful Idea of his repairing the Ruins of Nature, produced an extraordinary Dream, which I remember very diſtinctly, and will repeat as conciſely as I can. I imagined myſelf in the midſt of a ſpacious Plain, in which all the human Inhabitants of the Earth were aſſembled. Their Buſineſs was to petition the Creator of the Univerſe that the Sun might be put under a better Regulation. Some complained of its too near Approaches, others of its too great Diſtance; ſome were diſſatisfied at their little Portion of Day, others intreated for longer Intervals of Night. At length it was agreed to petition, that every Quarter of the Earth ſhould have an equal Proportion of Day and Night,

Night, and enjoy the ſame Degree of Light and Heat. While I was trembling for the Event, and even wiſhing myſelf of any other Species than that of Men, my Fears were removed by a Voice which ſpoke, with inexpreſſible Benignity, to this Effect: "My "Children of the Earth, I forgive "theſe Inſtances of vain and ignorant "Preſumption, becauſe I have allot-"ted you but a ſmall Portion of Know-"lege. That Portion, however, is "ſufficient for your Happineſs, if you "employ it to the Purpoſes for which "I gave it. I allowed you a Capacity "to learn the Properties of natural "Productions, becauſe I intended "them to relieve you in natural Evils. "I ſuffered your Knowledge to reach "even ſo far as the Motion of what "you call the Heavenly Bodies, that "you might paſs with more Security "from one Region to another, con-"nect yourſelves more generally with "your fellow Creatures, and enjoy the "various Productions of Art and Na-

" ture, that the different Parts of your
" Planet would afford. I gave you
" the Power, in many Inſtances, of
" foreſeeing the Effect in the Cauſe,
" that you might attend to the moral
" Conſequences of your Actions, and
" be virtuous for the ſake of your own
" Happineſs—But the Knowledge that
" would be of no uſe to you, I have
" not allowed you; becauſe it would
" withdraw your Attention from thoſe
" Objects that require it. Ceaſe to
" cenſure what you can never know.
" The Plan of my Providence is ſet-
" tled from Eternity. To communi-
" cate as much Happineſs to my Crea-
" tures, as their Station in the Order
" of Beings is capable of, was my
" everlaſting Purpoſe, and to in-
" dulge your vain Requeſt were now
" to break it. Go, then, my Chil-
" dred, and *learn, in whatſoever State*
" *you are, therewith to be content.* My
" providential Care will always follow
" you, and refuſe you ſuch deſtructive
" Things as your Ignorance may de-
" ſire.

" ſire. Let not the little Knowledge
" I have given you make you ungrate-
" ful—Creatures that have leſs than
" you, have not learned to be ſo."
Judge, my dear Friend, of the Impreſſion this Speech left upon me. Even after I awaked, I felt it at my Soul. My Heart laboured under the Conſciouſneſs of the paternal Love of God, and I never knew any Senſation reſembling it but one, which was when I accidentally overheard my Father praying for me.

FREDERIC.

I am greatly delighted with the Effects of your Dream. It reminds me of a beautiful Paſſage in the Speech of ELIHU to JOB, of which, too, it is a ſtrong Illuſtration. If you take down that Bible, you may find it in the thirty-third Chapter.

PHARAMOND.

You mean this. "Why doſt thou "ſtrive againſt Him, for He giveth "not Account of any of his Matters?"

FREDERIC.

That, too, is well illuſtrated by your Dream; but proceed.

PHARAMOND.

"For God ſpeaketh once, yea "twice; yet Man perceiveth it not; "in a Dream, in a Viſion of the Night, "when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, "in Slumberings upon the Bed. Then "He openeth the Ears of Men, and "ſealeth their Inſtruction."

FREDERIC.

You ſee there is a good deal of Poetry in that Paſſage, particularly in the Expreſſion of opening the Ears of Men, in

in that paſſive State, and ſealing them with Inſtruction; yet that is no Reaſon why there ſhould not likewiſe be much Truth in it. For my own Part, I give it the utmoſt Credit, and look upon it to be perfectly agreeable to the benevolent Agency of Providence.—But I think the Verſe that follows what you have read is ſtill more to the Purpoſe of your Dream.

PHARAMOND.

"That he may withdraw Man from "his Purpoſe, and hide Pride from "Man."

FREDERIC.

That comes home to the Buſineſs of your ideal Aſſembly, whoſe Self-Opinion, it ſeems, would have led them to Deſtruction; and, indeed, it is of the greateſt moral Conſequence to Man, that he ſhould be made to feel his Dependency on Providence, and loſe Sight of his natural Pride; as well as

that it muſt frequently be both for his Happineſs and Safety, to be withdrawn from his Purpoſe by that inviſible Hand, which deſtroys, out of Kindneſs, our moſt flattering Schemes.

PHARAMOND.

I thank you for theſe Obſervations, which once more call to mind our Yeſterday's Converſation. Shall we reſume that Part of the Subject which was left unconſidered? Are you now inclined to inform me what CONSOLATIONS may ariſe from PHILOSOPHY?

FREDERIC.

In the firſt Place, it will be neceſſary for us to conſider what is Philoſophy; for the Term has been no leſs miſapplied than that of Religion itſelf; and the latter, in Proportion to its Importance, has not ſuffered more from Fanaticiſm, than the former from Sophiſtry. The one has been no leſs injuriouſly

juriouſly repreſented than the other. There has always been a Kind of moral Empirics, who affected the Name and the Profeſſion of Philoſophy, and preſcribed for the Mind as their phyſical Brethren do for the Body; that is, by removing one Diſorder they brought on another. It was their Paſſion for a Syſtem, or the Affectation of acting from a peculiar Principle, that ſo generally miſled them. Not conſidering, that Minds, like Bodies, are of different Conſtitutions; that the Modes of their Diſeaſes are conſequently different, and not to be treated in the ſame Way, they had a *Noſtrum* for all, and being generally applied, it was generally pernicious. If the Diſeaſe were removed, it was ſtill followed by a worſe. The Obduracy of the Stoic deſtroyed the Virtues that depend on Senſibility: the Contemptuouſneſs of the Cynic cut him off from the Affections of Society: the Epicurean's Avidity of Pleaſure made him the more a Prey to Pain; and the Philoſophy of

the other Sects, if not ſo pernicious, was ſtill more uſeleſs. You muſt underſtand, however, that I except SOCRATES, on Account of his Doctrine of future Rewards and Puniſhments. From none of theſe Sects, then, nor from their Syſtems, can we derive any rational or laſting Conſolation for the Purpoſes of Life. The Stoic, indeed, bids the faireſt for ſerving us, if we follow him only through a Part of his Opinions.

PHARAMOND.

You have ſhewn but little Reverence for the Beards of ancient *Greece*, and that, you know, as a Lover of Antiquity, to me muſt be ſomewhat mortifying. I am pleaſed, however, to find, that you have ſome Indulgence for the Stoic, and ſhall be glad to know what Part of his Doctrine you approve.

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

His firm Belief of a particular Providence is certainly the beſt and moſt uſeful Part of his Doctrine; but that is an Article of Religion. What may principally be of uſe to us in his Philoſophy, is the Regulation of the Mind, and of our Deſires and Averſions: For PHILOSOPHY CONSISTS IN FORMING A RIGHT ESTIMATE OF THINGS, AND IN REGULATING OUR CONDUCT AGREEABLY TO THAT ESTIMATE. It is Rectitude of Sentiment and Reſolution of Soul. I cannot give you a better or nobler Idea of it, than in the Words of VALERIUS MAXIMUS—*Eſt et illa vehemens & conſtans Animi Militia, Literis pollens venerabilium Doctrinæ Sacrorum Antiſtes Philoſophia; quæ ubi Pectore recepta eſt Hominum, inhoneſto atque inutili Affectu diſpulſo, totos in ſolido Virtutis Munimento confirmat, potentiores Metu ac Dolore faciens.*

PHA-

PHARAMOND.

That is, indeed, the fulleſt and the nobleſt Idea of Philoſophy, I have ever met with. I beg you will repeat it, and in *Engliſh*, if you pleaſe.

FREDERIC.

" That Warfare of the Soul which " is carried on with ſuch Vigour and " Firmneſs, is under the Conduct of " Philoſophy, who is at once the Vo- " tary and the Prieſteſs of Science. " The Breaſt where ſhe preſides is di- " veſted of every baſe and uſeleſs Paſ- " ſion, and ſecured in the ſolid Ar- " mour of Virtue from the impotent " Attacks of Fear and Pain."

PHARAMOND.

Upon what Occaſion does the Eſſayiſt throw out this ſpirited and beautiful Paſſage? If I remember right, he does

does not treat particularly of Philoſophy in any Part of his Works.

FREDERIC.

It is in his Treatiſe *De Patientia*, or Fortitude in Suffering, after having inſtanced a noble Youth of *Macedon*, who, when he held up the Cenſer, while ALEXANDER ſacrificed, ſuffered his Arm to be almoſt conſumed by a burning Coal which fell upon it, that he might not, by withdrawing it, diſturb the Proceſs of the Rites. He ſpeaks of that Incident, with the utmoſt Credit; and adds, that if DARIUS had been preſent at the Scene, he might have been convinced, that an Army compoſed of a Race of Men, whoſe tender Years were capable of ſuch Fortitude, was not to be conquered.

PHARAMOND.

The Inſtance is certainly very extraordinary; and if Philoſophy be capable of training men to ſuch a Degree of Reſolution, the Attacks of Fear and Pain

Pain would, as the Author ſays, be very impotent indeed. However, I am not quite ſo credulous as the old Roman.

FREDERIC.

I ſee no Reaſon why you ſhould diſbelieve the Fact: But, be the Circumſtance in Queſtion true or falſe, I think there is no doubt that he aſſigns the proper Cauſes by which Philoſophy becomes capable of ſuch Effects.

PHARAMOND.

To point out thoſe Cauſes muſt be of Conſequence to our preſent Enquiry.

FREDERIC.

That was my Intention; and for the ſame Purpoſe I introduced the collective View of Philoſophy we have juſt menti-

mentioned. In that View you are preſented with

I. Her Endowments; *Literis pollens*; excellent in Knowledge.

II. Her Office; *venerabilium Doctrinæ Sacrorum Antiſtes.* The Prieſteſs of Learning, preſiding over and directing its Influence and Uſe.

III. Her Operation on the Mind; *Quæ ubi Pectore recepta eſt Hominum, inhoneſto atque inutili Affectu diſpulſo, totos in ſolido Virtutis Munimento confirmat.* Diſpoſſeſſing it of every baſe and unprofitable Attachment, and ſecuring it in the ſolid Armour of Virtue.

IV. The Effects of her Operations. *Potentiores Metu ac Dolore faciens.* Making

Making us ſuperior to Fear and Pain.

Is this View of Philoſophy ſufficiently diſtinct, or ſhall I exhibit it more minutely?

PHARAMOND.

I am ſatisfied with the Manner in which the ſeveral Points are laid down; but I would have them reſpectively illuſtrated and explained.

FREDERIC.

I. The firſt Object, then, is the Endowments of Philoſophy—She muſt be excellent in Knowledge. As her Purpoſe is to form a right Eſtimate of Things, it is neceſſary that ſhe ſhould be acquainted with their Nature and Properties. To know the Qualities, the Capacity, the Propenſities of human Kind, ſhe muſt have ſtudied their Hiſtory

Hiſtory from the earlieſt Accounts of Time. We arrive at every Truth moſt ſucceſsfully by Compariſon; and it is from a comparative View of Men under the Influence of different Governments, Religions, and Educations, that Philoſophy muſt acquaint herſelf with the Properties of human Nature. But her Study muſt be confined to the Knowledge of Man only: So far as Science or Experience may direct her, ſhe is to enquire into every thing that relates to his Exiſtence. The ſeveral Elements, the ſeveral Creatures, all Animal, all Vegetable Being, in which human Life has any Intereſt or Concern, ſhould be the Objects of her Study. There is a nearer Connection between moral and natural Philoſophy than is generally imagined. The Oeconomy of the Mind alone is the Province of the former; but while the Mind has ſuch an Intimacy with the Body, the Knowledge of what nearly con-

concerns the latter, cannot be uneſſential to its Quiet.

PHARAMOND.

I am ſorry to interrupt you—But your moral Philoſopher, who is, by virtue of his own Doctrine, ſuperior to Pain—What has he to do with the Aids of Natural Philoſophy? What Occaſion for the Phyſic of the Field to him, who precludes every Evil by the Phyſic of the Mind?

FREDERIC.

I ſhall always be glad to attend to your Objections; but here you take an unfair Advantage, by diſmembering the Argument before all its Limbs are put together.—A little Patience, and if you do not find your Objection removed as I proceed, I will anſwer it more particularly whenever you ſhall renew it.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

Excuſe me, Sir! I attend to you.

FREDERIC.

The Learning of Philoſophy I ſuppoſe to imply the greateſt Acquiſition, as well of natural, as of moral Knowledge; becauſe I look upon her Province to comprehend the Study and Cultivation of every thing that is advantageous to human Life. How much the Knowledge of Nature in general contributes to the Improvement of the intellectual Faculties, and the Enlargement of the Mind, may be gathered from the united Sentiments of all the wiſeſt Men that have written on the Subject. At the ſame Time that the Ideas are extended by this Study, they are exalted too. The Mind acquires a Dignity, in Proportion to the Treaſures that it lays up: Like the Body, it gets Health, and Strength, and

and Riches by Labour. There is an intellectual Independency which has its Charms; a conſcious Security in our own Stock of Knowledge; when we are not obliged to borrow for the Purpoſes of Life.

PHARAMOND.

All this is excellent in Theory; but if Philoſophy requires ſuch Acquiſitions as you ſpeak of, I apprehend that the Number of Philoſophers muſt be very ſmall indeed.

FREDERIC.

Thus far, notwithſtanding, would I extend the Aim of Philoſophical Learning. A Philoſopher ſhould be a kind of earthly Deity, and poſſeſs the glorious Attribute of being, humanly ſpeaking, ſufficient unto himſelf.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

This is changing Doubt for Deſpair.

FREDERIC.

Deſpair of nothing: That is one of the firſt Maxims of moral Improvement; and in all Caſes of intellectual Proficiency, it ſhould be followed without Exception. The Powers of the Mind are more extenſive, and it is capable of much greater Attainments than is generally imagined. You obſerve, that the Perfection of Philoſophy implies, in the firſt Place, the moſt improved State of the mental Faculties—It is the moſt *perfect* Idea of Philoſophy I would exhibit to you. With Regard to all Objects of virtuous Emulation, it is a Rule, both in Ethics and Religion, to place the higheſt Excellence in View; the Reaſon of which, no doubt, is, that the improveable

able Faculties may be exerted to the utmoſt—But though we ſhould fall greatly ſhort of the Perfection which we carry in our Ideas, that ſhould be no neceſſary Cauſe for Deſpair. It is a Precept in Religion, that we ſhould be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect; we know this to be impoſſible, yet there is no Impropriety in the Exhortation; the Divine Model is placed before us, and we are to reſemble it as nearly as we can.

PHARAMOND.

I enter into your Reaſons with ſome Degree of Satisfaction; yet ſtill I wiſh you would not carry your Idea of Philoſophy ſo high—I may behold her fair Beauty, but, indeed, I deſpair of viſiting her Temple, or of being numbered amongſt her Votaries.

FRE-

FREDERIC.

Once more you have broken the Maxim I this Moment mentioned. However, I will ſay no more concerning the Attainments of Philoſophy. The greater they are, the more powerful, the more uſeful ſhe will prove. Let us now think a little of her Office.

II. She is ſtiled the Prieſteſs of Learning, preſiding over and directing its Influence and Uſe.

PHARAMOND.

I expect much Inſtruction from this Part of your Obſervations. There is certainly more Art required in the Application of Knowledge than in the Acquiſition of it.

FREDERIC.

You are undoubtedly in the right; and it is the true Application of it that con-

conſtitutes the very Eſſence of Philoſophy. To ſtudy the Properties of Nature, and the Laws of her viſible Oeconomy, makes the Man of Science; to revolve the Annals of human Kind, and to ſearch into the Origin and Progreſs of the various Societies of Men may form the Hiſtorian, the Legiſlator, the Politician; but it is a peculiar Application only of theſe, and the other Branches of Knowledge, that conſtitutes the Philoſopher. The Man of Science, by acquainting himſelf with the Works of Nature and the Principles of her Oeconomy, becomes rich in Speculation. His Head is full of Theory, and Proceſſes, and Syſtems. But there he ſtops: His Learning is no further of Uſe to him, than as it ſerves to amuſe his Hours by contemplative Exerciſes. He is ſtill but a Man of Science; he is not a Philoſopher—No, PHARAMOND! Philoſophy has a different Uſe to make of the valuable Knowledge which is to be acquired from the Book of Nature. It teaches

us

us to cultivate it for the Purpoſes of Life—To apply it to the End and Condition of our Exiſtence. A Philoſopher, when he beholds God in the reſt of the Creation, beholds Him likewiſe in himſelf. The Eyes of a Fool are in the Ends of the Earth, and they continue there. The Eyes of a Philoſopher are in the Ends of the Earth, and they return to him laden with Wiſdom and Inſtruction. The Fool may behold as much of Nature, his Curioſity may be as ſtrong, his Search as induſtrious; but ſtill he is at a Diſtance from himſelf. Like that Truant Species of the Bee, which paſſes from Flower to Flower without the Care of making Honey, he derives no Advantage from the Variety or the Extent of his Inquiries; and like that, too, when the Winter of Adverſity approaches, he has no Repoſitory where he may find Relief. With the Philoſopher every thing is otherwiſe. What he touches, he turns to Gold. The Know-

ledge of Nature, in particular, is of the greateſt Service to him. When he beholds the Principles of her Oeconomy, he accommodates himſelf to them, and makes them the Rule of his Life—He ſees, for Inſtance, that ſhe delights in Simplicity, and that all her Works, however artificially conſtructed, are ſupported by the ſimpleſt Means. He follows religiouſly the Suggeſtions that ariſe from her, and ſuſtains himſelf by plain and unmodified Aliments. Hence his Body is free from thoſe morbid Humours that ariſe from the Compounds of alien Food, and the Ferment of contending Qualities.—It was a ſimple but a valuable Privilege which the Flocks of TITYRUS enjoyed; I mean that of feeding in the ſame Paſturage—*Non inſueta tentabunt Pabula*, cried the envying Exile—Your Sheep will not be tainted by a Variety of Paſture—Thus, if we may compare ſmall Things with great, it fares with the Philoſopher. He lives in a ſim-

a ſimple and uniform Manner; and avoids a Variety of Aliments that his Juices may be preſerved pure. While the Body is kept in due Order, the Taſk of the Mind is much eaſier. True Wiſdom directs itſelf to every End by the eaſieſt Means. Though by many moral and intellectual Aids the Philoſopher may render himſelf ſuperior both to moral and natural Evil, yet, againſt the latter, he will always ſeek natural Aids and Antidotes. In Religion it is a Rule that a Man ſhould not tempt God; it ought to be a Rule in Philoſophy that he ſhould not tempt Nature. The former, uncorrupted by Fanaticiſm, teaches us to make uſe of thoſe obvious Means of Grace which have *appeared to all Men*, without looking for ſupernatural Aids or extraordinary Illuminations; the latter, unperverted by Sophiſtry, inſtructs us to draw from Nature ſuch Reliefs and Antidotes as an Experience and Inveſtigation have made known to Men,

without the moral Knight-Errantry of combating every thing by mental Fortitude.

PHARAMOND.

I thank you particularly for theſe Obſervations, as I perceive you meant them for an Anſwer to my Objections. You will pardon me for interrupting you once more; I could not forbear to expreſs the Satisfaction you have given me.

FREDERIC.

If I have removed your Objections, I have acquitted myſelf of my Promiſe, and my Taſk is eaſier—The Mind of Man, I was about to obſerve, in its improved State of Philoſophy, might be compared to a fortified Town, the Inhabitants of which ſhould not depend excluſively either on the Plenty of their Stores within, or on the Strength of their Works without. One of

of thoſe Aids without the other would always be ineffectual. In like Manner it is the Property of true Wiſdom to unite the external Succours of Nature, with the inward Support of Reaſon, and to make them auxiliary to each other. To diſcover thoſe Succours and to know thoſe Supports is the End of Study and of Science; to apply them properly is the Uſe of them.—

PHARAMOND.

Though the Morning waſtes, you will not let the Converſation drop here ——The Subject is too intereſting. What can be more pregnant with the Conſolations of human Life, than the Application of Learning under the Direction of Philoſophy?

FREDERIC.

I pauſed to relieve you; if you are not weary, then, I will proceed.—

With regard to what may be called the higher Parts of Science, Geometry, Aſtronomy, &c. the Advantage which Philoſophy may derive from theſe for the Conſolations of Life, conſiſts principally in the Enlargement and Extenſion of our Ideas. From hence we are enabled to form a diſtinct and comparative View of our own Allotment in the Syſtem of the Univerſe. Our private Importance leſſens in our Eyes, in Proportion as they are attracted by the Superiority of other Beings, the Multitude of other Worlds, and the Immenſity of the Creation. Self-Anxiety leſſens in Proportion as Self-Importance decreaſes.—The Contemplation of great Objects makes us attentive to ſmall ones, and to be deeply intereſted about them ſeems ridiculous.—I once viſited a learned Friend, and found him penſive in his Study, with FONTENELLE's Plurality of Worlds, and a Sheet of Paper, full of Blots and Figures, lying before him. "I have been ſeeking

"Amuſe-

" Amuſement, ſaid he, and I have
" met with Melancholy. I ſat down
" to calculate the Number of rational
" Beings that might be contained in the
" whole Planetary Syſtem, ſuppoſing
" that each Planet might be inhabited
" in Proportion to this our Earth. In
" the midſt of my Calculations, the
" Moths fell ſo faſt from my Candle,
" that they almoſt covered my Paper.
" This Circumſtance ſtruck me with
" diſagreeable Reflections—I conſider-
" ed, that while I was numbering
" one Species of Beings, I was deſt-
" roying another; and the uncertain
" Tenure of Exiſtence in general,
" was a Subject that occaſioned leſs
" pleaſing Speculations."

This learned Man, you ſee, brought his Philoſophy into Uſe. He reduced it to Practice, and applied it to the Circumſtances of his own Being.

PHARAMOND.

Yet I do not perceive what Advantage he derived from it.

FREDERIC.

You find it was a Diſadvantage. And at the ſame time you will obſerve, how eaſily Philoſophical Reflections may be miſapplied. That uncertain Tenure of Life, which is equally the Lot of all Animal Exiſtence, inſtead of exciting melancholy Ideas, ſhould have produced the Sentiments of Reconciliation and Acquieſcence. When the Philoſopher beheld the Moths fallen dead upon his Paper, it might very naturally have occured to him, that it is more than probable a Species of Beings may exiſt, in whoſe Eſtimation the Fall of Men muſt ſeem of as little Conſequence, as the Fall of Moths is to Men. As every thing appears great or little by Compariſon, he might thus have

have found the Inſignificancy of his own Being, and learned to be leſs ſolicitous about its End. It is by looking down the Scale of Being that we acquire Importance; and in Conſequence of that we lay up Diſcontent. Look upward, and we leſſen unavoidably, even in our own Opinion.

PHARAMOND.

But will this contribute at all to our Happineſs? I have been told, and, I think, by Philoſophers too, that it in ſome Meaſure depends on a *good* Opinion of ourſelves.

FREDERIC.

Literally, you are in the right. It is a *great* Opinion of ourſelves, of our Exiſtence and Mode of Being in general, from which it is the Buſineſs of Philoſophy to wean us. When by a rational Survey of our own State we find our comparative Weakneſs and Inſig-

nificancy, our Opinions are neceſſarily reduced to the Level of our Condition. Hence all thoſe Swellings of Mind which are the Excreſcence of Vanity ſubſide and fall away, and we obtain at the ſame time a happy Exemption from the many idle Pains that attend them.

PHARAMOND.

That would, indeed, be a very glorious Effect of Philoſophy:—How much to be envied!

FREDERIC.

Believe me, PHARAMOND, there is nothing more natural, nothing more practicable. The Principle is allowed:

Sincerum eſt niſi Vas, quodcunque infundis aceſcit.

Here

Here, you ſee, we arrive at that Limit of our Diſcourſe, where we placed the Operation of Philoſophy on the Mind. But of this, I ſuppoſe, we ſhall ſpeak better if we allow ourſelves a little Reſpite.

CON-

CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE III.

CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE III.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

FREDERIC.

YOU are one of the few Perſons, PHARAMOND, whom I am neither afraid nor unwilling to truſt with my Sentiments. You have taught me a Kind of Confidence and a Readineſs of Communication, which are not natural to me. At leaſt I have met

met with few Perſons, whom either Pride or Prudence, or poſſibly ſomething between both, have not reſtrained me from engaging in ſuch Converſations as theſe.

PHARAMOND.

Your Charity, Sir! Your Humanity—

FREDERIC.

No—A Mind ſo well furniſhed as yours is not the Object of either—We have a Pleaſure in communicating our Sentiments where we think they will be ſenſibly and ingenuouſly received. When a Traveller is overtaken by the Evening, if he diſcovers a Light in ſome neighbouring Cottage, it is natural for him to rejoice. But his whole Pleaſure does not, I preſume, ariſe from his Expectations of Hoſpitality and Security. He hopes to meet with ſome

ſome kind Ear to which he may impart the Circumſtances of the Day, deſcribe the Ways he paſſed through, and, more particularly the Obſervations that occurred to him as he proceeded. Such is the Satisfaction I have in converſing with you—In paſſing through Life I have made ſome curſory Remarks, which I am vain enough to find a Pleaſure in communicating, though, perhaps, they may be uſeleſs to every other Traveller.

PHARAMOND.

Be aſſured there is one Perſon for whom I have ſo much Regard, that I will not ſuffer him either to forget, or to miſapply them. I flatter myſelf, at leaſt, that no material Circumſtance of our late Converſations will ever eſcape me. And I am now able to remind you of what you poſſibly have forgot, that you proceeded no farther in your Account

Account of Philoſophy, and the Conſolations that may be derived from her, than thoſe Arguments that had reſpect to her Learning, and her Application of that Learning. Her Operations on the Mind were what you next propoſed to conſider.

FREDERIC.

Theſe the *Roman* Eſſayiſt calls, "The diſpoſſeſſing it of every baſe "and unprofitable Attachment, and "ſecuring it within the ſtrong Forti- "fications of Virtue." There is the cloſeſt Analogy imaginable between the Operations of the natural and the moral World in general; but this appears in nothing more clearly, than in their Renovation and correcting Principles.—When Nature falls into a depraved or vitiated Habit, her firſt Efforts are to diſengage herſelf from the Cauſes that brought it upon her. In the firſt Stages of her Diſtemper, ſhe will

will generally, if left to herſelf, effect her own Cure; in the laſt, ſhe as frequently requires external Aids: And, as if ſhe had been conſcious of the Wants and Infirmities that might befall her, thoſe Aids ſhe has provided us in her own Productions. The ſame Conduct is obſervable in the Oeconomy of the Mind. It has a peculiar intrinſic Power, which reſiſts and throws off the firſt Impreſſions of Vice; and which, for a while, is ſufficient to reſtore it to its native Freedom and Purity. It oppoſes the Beginnings of Error, too, in the ſame Manner, and, during the firſt Advances, will often fall back to the natural Principles of Truth. But when Error and Depravity have eſtabliſhed themſelves by Habit, then it is that the moral, like the material Nature, requires external Aſſiſtance. This Aſſiſtance is to be ſought in Philoſophy, o. the Cultivation of Reaſon: which, by exalting the Mind,

Mind, diſpoſſeſſes it of ſuch Attachments as are baſe and unworthy of it, by enlightening it, of ſuch as are vain and unprofitable. In this we may behold one of the moſt important Uſes of Learning, that Men of cultivated Minds, if they deviate into Vice or Error, are more eaſily reclaimed than others. They have acquired a Dignity, a Delicacy of Sentiment, which continually oppoſes the Purſuit of low and unworthy Objects; or, if they are already engaged in it, diſquiets them in the Progreſs.

PHARAMOND.

How happy, my dear Sir, are ſuch Effects as theſe! Surely the Cultivation of the Mind, the Acquiſition of Knowledge, are ſuperior to every other poſſible Advantage.

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

Their Uſe and Excellence are by no means comparative; there is nothing that can, with any Propriety, be placed in Competition with them. Let us recollect, however, that we are here ſpeaking of one particular good Effect of Philoſophy, that Operation on the Mind which removes its vain and idle Attachments.—Your Favourite Poet will help us forward here:

Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas;
Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile Fatum
Subjecit pedibus, ſtrepitumque Acherontis
avari.

The firſt Step, you ſee, is to become acquainted with the original Frame and Conſtitution of Nature; the Plan, as far as it may be traced, and the eſtabliſhed Laws of her Oeconomy; her general Deſign, and her particular Purpoſes;

poſes; the Value ſhe apparently ſets on every Species of Being, from the Duration ſhe allows it, or the Care ſhe takes in its Preſervation.—By thus ſtudying and attending to the original Deſign, and the particular Oeconomy of Nature, we ſhall learn, by Degrees, to make our Eſtimates agreeable to them. We ſhall put ourſelves in her Place, make her Laws our Laws, and ſet the ſame Value on every Part of her Works that ſhe herſelf ſeems to have ſet upon them.—Let us ſtop here, and ſee how many idle Prejudices, how many ſenſeleſs Fears, how many vain Prepoſſeſſions, how many ridiculous Sorrows will at once fall to the Ground!

PHARAMOND.

I ſee, I feel it.

FRE-

FREDERIC.

Continue in this Poſition; keep your Eye fixed here. We are now looking down upon the Creation. You ſee that innumerable Multitude of Worlds—

PHARAMOND.

Aſtoniſhing!—Magnificent beyond Expreſſion!

FREDERIC.

Yet theſe are, comparatively, nothing, the Production of a ſingle Idea—

PHARAMOND.

Great God! Whither are you leading my trembling Imagination?——I dare not follow you farther—I fear—

FREDERIC.

Come on; we ſhall find our Advantage in it—The Heights of Philoſophy are arduous, indeed; but when once we have reached them, we breathe a very ſalutary Air—Yes, PHARAMOND, we will conclude, that this Multitude of Worlds was arranged by one ſingle Idea of the univerſal Spirit and Intelligence which animated and diſpoſed the Portions of Matter.—But can you ſuppoſe that you behold in this Syſtem the Limits of Creation? As well might a Peaſant, who inhabits the Valley of the *Griſons*, conclude, when he aſcends Mount *Cenis*, that the whole World is under his Eye. That ever active and creative Intelligence muſt have exerted itſelf in the Formation of Syſtems innumerable, incomprehenſible; in Compariſon of which this that we inhabit, is probably no more than the Duſt of the Balance.—Perhaps, even now,

now, the Buſineſs of Creation is following the leading Hand of its intelligent and ſpiritual Principle, and while we are diſcourſing on ſome parts of Exiſtence, others are ſpringing forth.

PHARAMOND.

I am loſt, my Friend; my Imagination is overwhelmed and ſunk under the Magnificence of the Ideas you have excited.—Good Heaven! How little, how inſignificant do I find myſelf!

FREDERIC.

That is a Point gained—but gained, perhaps, too ſoon. The Senſe you at preſent entertain of the comparative Unimportance of Man, was excited by carrying our Ideas upwards; let us ſee whether it may not be confirmed by bringing them downwards.

PHARAMOND.

I attend to you—but I do not apprehend the Argument you have in View.

FREDERIC.

It has been obſerved, that we ought to form our Eſtimates of Things in Proportion to the Value which Nature ſeems to have ſet upon them.

PHARAMOND.

You have obſerved this.

FREDERIC.

And that the Degree of Importance, they appear to have with her, may be learned from the Duration ſhe has allowed them, and from the Care ſhe has taken for their Preſervation.

PHARAMOND.

This ſeems reaſonable; yet I am in ſome Pain about the Inferences to which

which you are making your Way—I do not like this Socratic Method of Argument—It brings one aground, without the Poſſibility of getting off.

FREDERIC.

Surely, you need be in no Pain about thoſe Concluſions to which Reaſon leads you—Let us follow her coolly, and ſhe will direct us ſafely.

PHARAMOND.

Excuſe me; you know I am naturally diffident, and timorous—in Points of great Importance afraid, both of making Conceſſions, and of drawing Concluſions.

FREDERIC.

I know of no worſe Cowardice than that of not daring to think—Come, let us go forward; we have but little

Light, 'tis true; but ſtill it is ſufficient to diſtinguiſh the Objects as we paſs—Upon our general Principle, that the moſt rational Eſtimate of every Being is to be drawn from the Duration aſſigned to it, and from the Care that Nature has taken for its Preſervation, what are we to think of Man?

PHARAMOND.

I am afraid to think at all.—

FREDERIC.

You muſt be cured of this Malady —It ſeems that Profligates aſſumed the glorious Title of Free Thinkers, becauſe honeſt Men had not Courage enough to aſſert their Right to it.

PHARAMOND.

It may be ſo: But I muſt leave you to the Honour of recovering the loſt Stan-

Standards. I ſhall freely own to you, however, that if we are to judge of the Importance of Man, in this Syſtem, from the Care that Nature has taken for his Preſervation, it will, in my Opinion, be found very inconſiderable—For where is there ſo defenceleſs a Creature? Where is there a Being over whom Death has ſo many Advantages?

FREDERIC.

Some of theſe Advantages Nature has allowed, and we have contributed many more—You ſhould conſider, however, that though human Beings may be liable to more than their Proportion of natural Infirmities, though their Bodies are not of the ſame robuſt Texture, nor armed with the ſame Means of Defence that other Creatures enjoy, yet theſe Defects are made up by a ſuperior Portion of Reaſon. This

taught them to ſeek, in an aſſociated State, that Security, which, as Individuals, they could not be ſaid to poſſeſs. Man is certainly thus in a more defenſible State, than he would have been, if Nature, inſtead of this Privilege, had given him Limbs ſufficient to grapple with the Lion.

PHARAMOND.

That, in one Senſe, is allowable. Yet I queſtion, whether the Privilege you ſpeak of has not deſtroyed more of the human Species, than would have fallen under the ſuperior Strength of Savages, in a *reaſonable* Conteſt for Maſt and Acorns.

FREDERIC.

I know not how to deny it.

PHA-

PHARAMOND.

Nay, the very *Indians* of *North America* will tell you, that when you brought the Improvements of Society amongſt them, you opened many Doors for Death.

FREDERIC.

Nothing more certain.

PHARAMOND.

What, then, is this boaſted Privilege of Reaſon?—Of Reaſon in its moſt cultivated State?——I am afraid this moral Defence is but a ſorry Alternative for natural Proweſs, conſtitutional Freedom, and Firmneſs of Body, and the uniform Enjoyment of Health and Vigour.—This very *Reaſon*, which, you ſay, Nature has given us by way of Armour and Security,—what has it done? It has taught us to

aſſociate, I own it, and brought Home to us thoſe Conſequences of Society we call the Improvements and Advantages of Life.—But how miſtaken are we in our Terms!—Theſe Improvements of Life are the Advantages of Death!—Who will have the Hardineſs to affirm, that, in Proportion as Society has been cultivated, human Life has been lengthened, has been ſecured? The Luxury, the Corruption, conſequent on that Cultivation, tell us a leſs pleaſing Truth

FREDERIC.

You are arrived at the Point in View, without giving me the Trouble of conducting you.

PHARAMOND.

What Point do you mean?

FREDERIC.

That Nature has taken but little Care for the Preſervation of human Life; ſince Reaſon, the only viſible Means of Defence ſhe has given us, has, in general, contributed rather to the Deſtruction than to the Security of our Species.

PHARAMOND.

And what would you infer from this melancholy Concluſion?

FREDERIC.

This obvious Truth, that as ſhe has taken but little Care to preſerve theſe Beings ſhe has given us, they are of no great Conſequence in her Eſtimation.

PHARAMOND.

Suppoſing that to be the Caſe, it is not eaſy to ſee what Conſolation ſo very mortifying a Doctrine can afford.

FREDERIC.

O, the greateſt imaginable!

PHARAMOND.

I am profoundly ignorant of this.

FREDERIC.

Does not our beſt and trueſt Wiſdom ariſe from the Principles of Nature?

PHARAMOND.

Certainly——There is no other Source for it.

FREDERIC.

Then we ſhall think moſt wiſely when we hold every Object in the ſame Eſtimation that ſhe appears to hold it.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

I underſtand you.—Upon this Principle it is our Wiſdom to ſet but little Value on this Life of ours, becauſe Nature herſelf ſeems to have ſet but little upon it.

FREDERIC.

That is what I would conclude.

PHARAMOND.

Alas! my Friend, you may call it Wiſdom, but the Conſolation it ſhould bring is ſtill out of Sight.

FREDERIC.

This Kind of Wiſdom renders it unneceſſary—It has ſomething more and better than Conſolation to afford us——It places us above the Want of it.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

It ſhews us our Weakneſs and Inſignificancy—

FREDERIC.

And at the ſame Time teaches us not to be anxious about that which is not worth our Anxiety.

PHARAMOND.

This is a Doctrine which it muſt be very difficult to reduce to Practice.

FREDERIC.

Have you not, when a School Boy, lamented the Fall of your Kite, when it was whirled down by ſome ſudden and unexpected Guſt of Air?

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

Nothing more likely—

FREDERIC.

And envied the Succeſs of thoſe who had not met with the ſame Misfortune?

PHARAMOND

Without doubt.

FREDERIC.

Your Envy and your Grief were both as rational as Grief and Envy can at any Time be, when excited by the Loſs of thoſe Objects you have fixed your Heart upon. Your Kite was of as much Conſequence to you then, as any other Thing can be at preſent, and there is nothing which you now lay to Heart, that is not equally liable to diſappoint

appoint you; that may not be taken from you by a Blaſt of Air.—Yet you ſmile at your boyiſh Sorrow, while you are ready to indulge it for Cauſes not in the leaſt more reaſonable.—Dear PHARAMOND, we are ſtill Children, till Philoſophy has opened the Mind, diveſted it of its unprofitable Attachments, and ſhewn it the Vanity of its idle Regrets—A Philoſopher looks upon the Miſeries of Men, as Men look upon the Diſtreſſes of Children—To him their Cauſes appear equally unreaſonable, and the Sorrows they raiſe upon them not leſs ridiculous.

PHARAMOND.

That exalted State of Mind, I own, is truly enviable.

FREDERIC.

To aſpire to it is to obtain it. And when, on a due Eſtimate of Life itſelf, and

and the ſeveral Circumſtances that attend it, we find nothing of a periſhable Nature worth either our Sorrows or our Cares, the Mind will ſeek for ſome Object of an immortal and unchangeable Quality, whereon it may exerciſe its Faculties, and that Object is Virtue. When the *Roman* Writer mentions this as the ſolid Armour with which Philoſophy inveſts her Votaries, I make no doubt that he means Greatneſs of Soul. Such was the general Idea that their Word *Virtus* conveyed, and in his progreſſive Account of Philoſophy he naturally leads to it. "It is the Property of her Operations, ſays he, to wean the Soul from low Affections; and by that Means to ſecure it within the ſtrong Fortifications of Virtue."—As if he had ſaid, When the Mind is diſattached to meaner Purſuits, it will naturally recur to ſuch as are greater and more worthy of it; it will acquire a Dignity which is the Foundation

Foundation of Virtue, which, in ſhort, is Virtue itſelf. Here we behold the Mind of Man in its happieſt State of Philoſophic Excellence, aſpiring to Virtue by conſulting its proper Dignity. Thus far we have endeavoured to trace the Operations of Philoſophy. Before we conſider the Effects of thoſe Operations, a little Reſpite, I believe, will be agreeable to us both.

CON-

CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE IV.

CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE IV.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

FREDERIC.

YOU have obſerved, that Travellers are more pleaſed with each other as they approach the End of their Journey.

PHARAMOND.

They are; and I ſuppoſe there is no great Difficulty in accounting for their good Humour. FREDE-

FREDERIC.

No—you and I find out the Cauſe by Experience. Our Philoſphical Expedition draws towards an End, and we now meet in better Spirits, becauſe we have leſs to go through.

PHARAMOND.

I am ſtill making the ſame unwary Conceſſions—Yet you are too hard upon me—You know I cannot bear it.

FREDERIC.

A very happy Effect of Philoſophy that!—Let us go on, then, and inquire, what are the other good Effects of her Operations.

PHARAMOND.

Pardon me—I attend to you very ſeriouſly.

FREDE-

FREDERIC.

IV. To be ſuperior to Fear and Pain, PHARAMOND! to Apprehenſions for the future, and Diſtreſs for the paſt.—

PHARAMOND.

That is, indeed, a moſt deſirable State.

FREDERIC.

And we are aſſured that this is in the Gift of Philoſophy. Nay, if we recollect her Powers and Purpoſes, we ſhall hardly doubt of it. When ſhe has enlarged the Mind, extended its Ideas, and taught it a rational Eſtimate of Life, and the Contingencies of Life; Fear, with all its troubleſome Train of Anxieties, Solicitudes, and Apprehenſions, vaniſhes unavoidably.

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

Yet I am doubtful—

FREDERIC.

Of what? You will not charge on the Mind of a Philoſopher, a Mind that eſtimates every thing in Proportion to its Worth, and is regulated purely by unbiaſſed Reaſon; you will hardly charge on ſuch a Mind the Imputation of Folly.

PHARAMOND.

You cannot ſuppoſe it.

FREDERIC.

Then you will not think it capable of Fear: For *all Fear is Folly.*

PHA-

PHARAMOND.

How! then, are there not reaſonable Fears; I allow, the Expreſſion of *groundleſs Fears* is common, but, at the ſame Time, it ſeems to imply the Poſſibility of ſuch as are not groundleſs, ſuch as have ſome real Cauſe or Foundation, and, of Conſequence, are not unreaſonable.

FREDERIC.

Current Expreſſions, you know, do not always carry Truth and Propriety with them. And whatever they may inſinuate to the contrary, ſtill Fear and Folly are ſynonymous Terms.

PHARAMOND.

You will at leaſt have the Goodneſs to explain this Myſtery.

FREDERIC.

The Events we fear either will come to paſs, or they will not come to paſs—

PHARAMOND.

It eaſy to ſee what you would infer from thence. You will pardon me, but I am not to be ſatisfied with that trite Demonſtration, which is to follow your well known Propoſition. If I ſee any Evil impending, it muſt, it will excite my Fears If it be unavoidable, ſo much the worſe.

FREDERIC.

I am pleaſed to find that you are not to be carried away by the Slight of Syllogiſm, and that you ſaw through the Shadow I was holding up to you. Let us ever thus deſpiſe the Arts of Schoolmen, and collect our Opinions only

only from the Truth and Nature of Things—If theſe do not tell us that Fear is Folly, we will ceaſe to think it ſo.

PHARAMOND.

With that Method of Inquiry I ſhall be perfectly ſatisfied.

FREDERIC.

We muſt ſtill recur to our firſt Principle, and form our Eſtimate of Things agreeably to the Oeconomy of Nature. What is the Object of our Fears? Is it Death?—Let us conſider a Moment—Would you not think me a little unreaſonable, if I expreſſed ſome great Fear that the Sun would ſet to Day?—

PHARAMOND.

Why ſhould you put ſuch a Queſtion?

FREDERIC.

A little abſurd—

PHARAMOND.

Who could help it?

FREDERIC.

The Fear of Death is full as unreaſonable, full as abſurd. The Reſignation of Life is as natural and as neceſſary as the Reſignation of Day-light. The People that inhabit the other Side of the Globe have the ſame Title to the latter that we have. The ſucceeding Generation has as much Right to the Places we hold on Earth, as we had

had to thoſe of our Predeceſſors—To be afraid of Death, then, would not be fooliſh only; it would be unjuſt—One of the *Mooriſh* Kings of *Spain* thought very reaſonably on this Subject. His Favourite, in Compliment to his Maſter, complained that there was ſuch a thing as Death in the World.—"Hold, ſaid the Prince, let us not abuſe our beſt Friend—Had he not removed my Father, I ſhould neither have been Caliph, nor you Prime Miniſter."

PHARAMOND

All this ſeems very juſt.

FREDERIC.

You muſt be ſenſible that to fear any other natural Event is equally abſurd.

PHARAMOND.

It cannot be denied—But are there not moral Evils to be feared?

FREDERIC.

There are many which it muſt be reaſonable to guard againſt; none which it can be reaſonable to fear.

PHARAMOND.

That Diſtinction is fair and equitable; as you were determined to take away my Fears, it was but reaſonable you ſhould leave me Caution. But what ſhall we do with Pain?

FREDERIC.

You know we are ſpeaking of mental Pain, the Diſtreſſes of the Mind.

PHARAMOND.

I know it.

FREDERIC.

The ſame Principle that puts an End to our Fears, excludes our Sorrows too. It is equally unreaſonable either to dread or to deplore thoſe Events which happen in Conſequence of the eſtabliſhed Order of Nature. And as Caution, with Regard to moral Evils, is the proper Subſtitute of Fear; ſo, in a wiſe and well diſciplined Mind, Perplexity and Uneaſineſs will give Place to calm and unembarraſſed Sentiment.—And now, PHARAMOND, we have purſued this Subject as far as it would lead us; It is Time we ſhould relieve ourſelves by Attentions leſs abſtracted. What think you of Air and Exerciſe?

PHARA-

PHARAMOND.

With all my Heart——That is the Practical Philoſophy of the Body, in which I never fail to find my Account.

FINIS.